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The Friday Letter

Vol. 8 No. 6

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April 1, 1988

On the Hill



On March 30, Assistant Secretary John W. Bode testified before the House Select Committee on Hunger. The hearing was on "Hispanics in Poverty."

During his testimony, Bode made the following points:

. Food assistance is available to all needy citizens who cannot provide for themselves. The President's budget recommendation, submitted to the Congress several weeks ago, is the highest funding request in the history of the food assistance programs.

. In FY 1988, the Food Stamp Program is expected to provide assistance to about 18.8 million persons per month. Any household, regardless of ethnic or racial origin, that meets the eligibility requirements can receive food stamps. Almost 11 percent of all households participating in the Food Stamp Program are Hispanic.

. Funding for Hispanics in the Child Nutrition Programs has increased

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Health Unit Needs Your Help

The FNS Health Unit is desperately seeking your help. In order to demonstrate to the Red Cross that blood drives are worthwhile and should be at Park Center, 100 volunteers are needed to donate blood next Wednesday, April 6. Please contact the Health Unit nurse, Natalie McCarthy, at 756-6000 to make your appointment to donate blood during this special effort blood drive. Donor hours are between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Bode Visits Las Vegas E&T Unit

Assistant Secretary John W. Bode recently visited the Las Vegas Employment and Training (E&T) Unit.

Bode, who was in Las Vegas for a meeting of the Rural Telephone Bank Board, participated in an informal round table discussion with 12 former welfare/food stamp recipients who had been helped by the E&T staff.

The successful E&T graduates told Bode about their welfare experiences; the help and support they had received from the staff which motivated them to try to get off welfare; the problems they encountered once they had moved from welfare to employment, such as finding suitable day care and transportation to work; and how their self esteem had risen now that they were off welfare and working full time.



Bode listens to E&T graduates tell about their experiences in getting off welfare.

- Story and Photos by Dick Montoya
WRO Public Affairs Staff

Renshaw Killed in Auto Accident

The Western Regional Office was shocked and saddened early Tuesday when it learned of the death of John K. Renshaw.

John, who had been with the Western Region for nearly 10 years, was a food program specialist in the Food Distribution Program. He had also worked in the Food Stamp and Child Nutrition Programs.

John died in an automobile accident on March 29 while in Reno, Nevada, conducting a Food Distribution Program management evaluation.

The 40-year-old native of Maryland is survived by his wife Evelyn and children Katherine and Joshua.

-Story by Dick Montoya
WRO Public Affairs Staff

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steadily since FY 1980, from 18.6 percent to 21.3 percent of all funding in these programs. Although Hispanics comprise approximately 8 percent of all children in schools with the school lunch and school breakfast programs, they receive approximately 21 percent of all Federal funding in these programs.

. In FY 1988, FNS will spend approximately \$1.8 billion on WIC, more than twice the 1980 level, which reflects a participation increase of over 50 percent since 1981. Overall Hispanic participation in WIC has grown from 18.9 percent in FY 1980 to 20.1 percent of all participation in FY 1986.

. In the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), overall Hispanic participation has grown substantially, from 8.3 percent in FY 1982 to 11.6 percent in FY 1986. Applying the average Hispanic participation figures to total CSFP expenditures reveals that, on average, about \$5.5 million was spent on Hispanics in FY 1986.

. The Federal government is doing more now than ever before to meet the food assistance needs of low-income Americans, including Hispanics.

Other witnesses included: Representative Albert Bustamante (D-TX); Representative Bill Richardson (D-NM); Manning Feinleib, DHHS; Rose Valdez, El Carmin Clinic, San Antonio, TX; Nylda Gemple, San Francisco WIC director; Dr. Fernando Mendoza, Stanford University School of Medicine; Adolph Falcon, National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Service Organizations; and the Cortez family from San Antonio, TX.

Linda L. Boling
Editor, Public Information Staff

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-Story by Catherine Whitehurst
Governmental Affairs Staff

USDA Holds Second Annual Chili Cookoff

There was a hot time in the old town as USDA held its second annual chili cookoff on the patio of the Administration Building recently. The cookoffs are sponsored by HACE, Hispanic American Cultural Effort, which is an organization of USDA employees.

The first place winner was our own Beverly King, deputy director, Food Distribution Division. Placing second and third were Brenda Joyce Clokey, USDA's Welfare and Recreation Association, and Ileana Vallarino (with Joe Trevino), Office of Advocacy and Enterprise.

While the five judges--Rep. E (Kika) de la Garza (D-TX), Deputy Secretary Peter Myers, Assistant Secretary Wilmer (Ben) Mizell, FSIS Deputy Administrator Joseph Powers, and Betty Baka, executive director of HACE--were tasting the 14 entries, the spectators had an opportunity to sample each contestant's chili, dance to live country music, and drink free Cokes.

The top three received a trophy; King and Clokey each won a dinner for two at a Mexican restaurant. Vallarino won a 6-month pass to USDA's health club as well as being voted by fellow chili contestants as having the best-tasting chili.

Phil Villa-Lobos, from the Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, had



FNS contestants were (left to right) Myra Luskey Sheriff, Bill Sheriff, and Beverly King.

the votes of the spectators for the best-tasting chili, and won tickets to hear singer Linda Ronstadt, who was currently touring in Washington.

-Story by Linda Boling
Photo by Larry Rana
Public Information Staff

Television Network Promotes Nutrition Education for Food Stamp Recipients

Thanks to a cooperative effort between the Southeast Regional Office and Cable News Network (CNN), local food stamp offices can now receive professionally produced videotapes on nutrition topics free of charge.

Dr. Betty Wills, a nutritionist with the Southeast Region's Family Nutrition Programs, and Carolyn O'Neil, a reporter for CNN's "Nutrition News," have worked together for nearly 2 years to develop the project. The two women, both registered dietitians, shared a mutual goal--to provide timely and entertaining nutrition information to low-income families.



Southeast Regional Administrator Virgil Conrad and Dr. Betty Wills present an award to CNN's Carolyn O'Neil (center) in recognition of her efforts to provide nutrition education to low-income families.

The results of their efforts are 30-minute videotapes consisting of

segments from "Nutrition News" interspersed with messages for food stamp recipients on such topics as buying food wisely and reporting changes in household circumstances. CNN staff produced the videotapes with technical assistance from Dr. Wills on the content.

The Southeast Regional Office will provide the videotapes to any regional office that requests them; however, each office is responsible for duplicating and distributing the tapes to states within its region. At present, two videotapes are available.

-Story and Photo by SERO Public Affairs Staff

MPRO Newsletter Makes Debut

The Special Nutrition Programs (SNP) staffers in the Mountain Plains Regional Office are proud of their new quarterly child nutrition newsletter, targeted to state agency directors and circulated also to field staff and other regions.

The idea for the "SNP Reporter" originated with former SNP Director Forrest Moore, who assigned nutritionist Stella Nash to produce the new publication. Moore passed along copies of newsletters from other regions and asked her to coordinate the new information vehicle with SNP section chiefs.

The first eight-page issue included a letter of introduction from Acting SNP Director John Merz and articles about Key Element Reporting Systems, AccuClaim, categorical eligibility, nutrition education, and the summer program. Also included were a regulations update and a brief introduction of key regional personnel. With favorable feedback from the Mountain Plains states, Nash and her coworkers have begun work on the next issue, scheduled for April 1.

-Story by Joanne Widner
MPRO Public Affairs Staff

Food Programs Participation Update

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of January with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>Jan. 1987</u>	<u>Dec. 1987</u>	<u>Jan. 1988 2/</u>
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>			
People participating (mil.)	19.4	18.5	18.7
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.)	889.7	933.0	935.7
Average bonus per person	\$ 45.98	\$ 50.43	\$ 49.94
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	985.0	1,034.6	1,037.3
<u>National School Lunch Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	90.2	90.6	90.6
Children participating (mil.)	23.8	24.5	24.3
Children reached with free or reduced price lunches (mil.)	11.6	11.6	11.6
Percentage of lunches served free	41.8	40.1	40.8
Percentage of lunches served at reduced price	6.8	6.7	6.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	326.2	284.3	331.8
<u>School Breakfast Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	37.4	38.7	38.7
Children participating (mil.)	3.6	3.6	3.6
Percentage of breakfasts served free or at reduced price	88.5	87.4	87.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	43.6	39.5	45.9
<u>Child Care Food Program:</u>			
Number of meals served in centers (mil.)	34.6	33.7	33.8
Number of meals served in homes (mil.)	24.5	27.3	26.2
Percentage of all meals served free	78.2	78.8	78.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	43.6	46.7	45.9
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>			
People participating (mil.)	3.4	3.5	3.5
Food cost (\$ mil.)	111.5	116.2	116.6
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	141.9	151.2	146.5
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program: 3/</u>			
People participating (thous.)	181.3	210.3	211.8
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	3.0	3.5	3.2
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>			
Number of projects in operation	106	106	106
People participating (thous.)	148.2	137.3	140.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	4.4	4.2	4.3
<u>Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program:</u>			
Total USDA cost (\$ mil.)	73.5	69.7	66.1

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

2/ Data collected as of March 24, 1988.

3/ Includes data for all elderly participants.

Job Opportunities

FNS is seeking to fill the vacant positions listed below. To be considered for one of them, submit an up-to-date SF-171, Application for Federal Employment, and current performance appraisal to the appropriate personnel office. If you are interested in a headquarters position, apply to the Operations Branch, Personnel Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexandria, Virginia

22302. Apply directly to headquarters office for all GM-14 and 15 positions. For regional positions, apply directly to the regional office. For details on the requirements for any of the positions listed below, consult the official vacancy announcement. These are posted on designated bulletin boards or copies can be obtained from the appropriate regional or headquarters personnel office.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing By Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
o Clerk Stay in Schooler	(A)	GW-303	1/2	Open	88-SIS	FNS
o Clerk Typist	(L)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until Filled	NONE	FNS
o Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open Continuous	88-999	FNS
o Nutritionist	(A)	GS-630	9/11	04/11/88	88-22	NTSD
o Systems Accountant	(G)	GS-510	12/13	04/18/88	88-23	DAFM
o Computer Program Analyst	(FNS-W)	GS-334	12/13	04/18/88	88-24	IRMD
o Management Analyst	(FNS-W)	GS-343	12/13	04/18/88	88-24A	IRMD
o Food Program Spec	(FNS-W)	GS-120	7	04/25/88	88-25	CND
o Food Program Spec	(G)	GS-120	7	04/25/88	88-26	CND
o Contract Specialist	(FNS-W)	GS-1102	11	04/18/88	88-27	DAM

Office Location

FNS	- Food and Nutrition Service
IRMD	- Information Resource Management Division
NTSD	- Nutrition and Technical Services Division
CND	- Child Nutrition Division
DAM	- Deputy Administrator for Management
DAFM	- Deputy Administrator for Financial Management

Area of Consideration

(A)	- All Sources
(FNS-H)	- FNS Headquarters Wide
(FNS-N)	- FNS Nationwide
(G)	- Governmentwide